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Howard Varney shows paintings at University of Montana

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HOWARD VARNEY SHOWS PAINTINGS AT UNIVERSITY

MISSOULA--Six years ago he had never painted a picture. Today Howard B. Varney's paintings are owned by Idaho Sen. Frank Church, Barry Goldwater, California's Ronald Reagan, former Pres. Dwight Eisenhower and A. B. Guthrie, Jr. of Missoula.

This week a collection of Varney's painting is being shown in the Student Union Building at the University of Montana where Varney once studied.

Born in Wisconsin, he moved to Helena at the age of 7. He finished high school there and entered the University of Montana Journalism School in 1923. He was on various athletic teams with legendary UM names such as Bill Kelly, Russ Sweet, the Dahlbergs, Chief Illman, Andy Cogswell and Arnie Gillette.

One quarter before graduation Varney left the University for a job with the Great Falls Tribune. He later worked for the Seattle P.I. where he met his wife Phyllis.

He worked as foreman of a 10,000 acre ranch in California and owned two small businesses before his retirement in 1960.

At that time his wife, a teacher, asked him to draw some posters for her Spanish class. With a 39¢ tin of water colors and no experience he began. From there he moved to oils.

Today, still without lessons, he has completed some 200 paintings and has been featured in four exhibitions.